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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/S:STHIBEAULT AND  
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBOURGEOIS, DBENZE AND  
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA RWINCHESTER  
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC  
CENTCOM FOR CCPA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: Damascus Media Reaction: Lebanon/Israel, Syria/Norway,  
Syria/Venezuela, Syria/Canada, Syria/Lebanon, Iraq, Palestinian  
Territories, Iran (8/18-20)

¶1. Summary: Syrian papers reported Israel's violation of the  
cease-fire in Lebanon through its landing attempt in Boudai  
village in the Bekaa Valley, and the ongoing dispute concerning  
France's participation in the international force.  
Papers also reported a meeting on Saturday between Foreign  
Minister Walid Mouallem and Elsidis Rodon, Venezuelan Deputy  
Foreign Minister, that focused on means of boosting bilateral  
relations. Both sides reviewed the situation in the region.  
Earlier, a session of talks was held between Syrian Deputy  
Foreign Minister Faisal Miqdad and his Venezuelan counterpart,  
touching on developments in the Middle East and in Latin America  
and on bilateral issues. Miqdad expressed high appreciation for  
Venezuelan President Chavez' condemnation of the Israeli  
aggression against Lebanon and defense of Arab rights. For his  
part, Rodon stressed his country's determination to boost  
relations with Arab countries, particularly Syria. He also  
expressed gratitude for the help Syria offered in evacuating  
Venezuelan citizens from Lebanon during the Israeli aggression.  
Foreign minister Walid al-Mouallem also held talks with Norway's  
envoy to the Middle East. Talks dealt with the situation in  
Lebanon and the means of establishing a just and comprehensive  
peace the Middle East.

Papers reported that Deputy Foreign Minister Dr. Faisal Miqdad  
held talks with delegations from the Canadian and Indian  
parliaments. Talk centered upon the situation in the region and  
repercussions of the Israeli military aggression on Lebanon.  
Both delegations emphasized the need "to deal with the deeply-  
rooted causes of the struggle in the Middle East," and called for  
ending the Israeli occupation of occupied Arab territories and  
implementation of relevant UN resolutions. Discussions touched  
upon the status of the occupied Palestinian territories and  
Israel's continuing illegal practices and violations of  
international law and UN resolutions. The Canadian delegation  
"expressed interest in what is taking place in the region" and  
announced its stand against "the unjustified war" waged by Israel  
against Lebanon, and its condemnation of "Israel's intentional  
targeting and destruction of Lebanese infrastructure."

Papers also reported that Minister of Information Mohsen Bilal called on the European Union and western countries to play a neutral role in securing peace in the Middle East. During a meeting with the Canadian Parliament delegation, the Minister warned against "the aggressive policies that the US and Israel are following in the region that are turning the Middle East into a focal point of crisis and tensions." The delegation pointed out that "there is a Canadian parliamentary movement, with which this delegation is associated, whose task is to enhance Canada's role in the international arena." The delegation added that their visit to Syria "comes within this framework due to Syria's important role in the region." Talks during the meeting also dealt with the situation in the Middle East and the role that Canada can play to solve the struggle in the region in a way that boosts international and regional security and stability.

Syrian editorialists and columnists responded to attacks against the Syrian position by Lebanon's Saad al-Hariri and Walid Junblatt. They defended the Syrian position as representative of the Arab peoples and accused critics of "defeatism" or involvement in Israeli-American plans against the Arab nation.

End of summary.

#### Selected Headlines:

"Lebanon calls on the United Nations to condemn the Israeli violation of cease-fire. The Lebanese Resistance foils an Israeli landing in Balabak, killing one officer and wounding two others. France's hesitation complicates European participation in international force" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/20)

"Syria expresses appreciation for Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez' stances. Foreign Minister Walid al-Mouallem discusses with Venezuelan Deputy Foreign Minister Elsidies Rondon boosting of bilateral relations" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/20)

"The UN is shocked by France's modest participation in the UNIFIL forces. Lebanese army units continue deployment in South Lebanon. Displaced Lebanese, whose houses were demolished during the war, receive compensations from Hizbollah. Olmert, Peretz and Halutz request the assistance of a team of lawyers to eliminate the repercussions of the defeat" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/19)

"Foreign Minister al-Mouallem and Norway's envoy to the Middle East review the situation in Lebanon and means to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the region" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/19)

"Vice President Shara holds talks with OIC delegation on consequences of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/18)

"Speaker of the People's Assembly confers with Canadian and Indian parliamentarian delegations. World parliaments express solidarity in facing sole superpower hegemony" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/18)

"Foreign minister reviews the situation in Lebanon during a phone call with Dutch Foreign Minister, reiterating the importance of an Israeli withdrawal behind the blue line" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/18)

"Minister of Information: Supporting the Resistance does not contradict the principle of peace" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/18)

"The Lebanese army deploys south of the Litani River. President Lahoud: We appreciate Syria's support; The Resistance weapon is an internal issue" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/18)

"Arab political analyst Haykal: The Israeli aggression was premeditated" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/18)

"Change in mood of the Russian street; a bias towards Lebanon and a decrease in the number of Russians sympathizing with Israel" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/19)

"Three Palestinians martyred. Hanieh sets conditions to join a national unity government. Olmert reconsiders his unilateral withdrawal plan from the West Bank after his failure in Lebanon" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/19)

"One Palestinian martyred in Gaza. Chairman of the Palestinian Legislative Council rejects legality of the Israeli court" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/18)  
"Two US soldiers killed in Iraq. Intensive security measures in Baghdad" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/19)  
"Iran commences comprehensive military maneuvers all over the country to face any potential attack" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 8/20)

## 12. Editorial Block Quotes:

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"The Band of Shame"  
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Isam Dari, an editorialist in government-owned Tishreen, commented (8/19): "It was not surprising for the leaders of the band of shame [Lebanese March 14 group] to come out of their holes to stab the Lebanese national resistance and Syria. This is the role it is assigned to play, and no one blames it for playing this role as long as its survival depends on it...."

"We wonder where the leaders of this group were when the heroes of the Resistance were confronting, with legendary courage, the world's fourth-ranking army and inflicting heavy losses and a miserable defeat on it...."

"During the war, the 'armed militias' of Walid Junblatt were erecting roadblocks to prevent the entry of Syrian and other foreign humanitarian assistance to South Lebanon."

"Lebanon will not be taken hostage by this deviant group, which is conspiring against Lebanon and its Arabism...."

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"Age of Heroes"  
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Samir al-Shibani, a commentator in government-owned Tishreen, wrote (8/19): "A new Arab age of honor and resistance has begun with the great achievement that the Lebanese Resistance scored in the battle against Israel.... Hizbollah's fighters presented the most wonderful epics of heroism and pride.... Lords of the civil war and the henchmen of the American-Israeli plan in Lebanon wagered on a defeat for the Resistance. But when the Resistance triumphed, they could not bear the glow of the Arab victory in Lebanon, which helped the nation regain its vitality, dignity, and pride...."

"Those Lebanese came out of their holes and began to encroach upon leaders for whom the whole nation chanted and under whose banners they pledged to fight.... The positions of Junblatt and Al-Hariri were not surprising because the two mortgaged themselves to the American devil at the beginning of the US plan to control the region, using every possible means to create civil strife in Lebanon and urge a new 17 May agreement...."

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"The May 17 Group in Action"  
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Abd-al-Fattah al-Awad, chief editor of government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote (8/18): "In his last visit to Beirut, Sa'd al-Hariri, leader of the Lebanese Future Block, presented himself as a stuttering spokesman for the enemies of Syria."

"Instead of focusing on support for the Resistance and laying the blame on Israel and the United States for their barbaric aggression against Lebanon, Al-Hariri, the deviant son, helps provide cover for the Israeli defeat and declares a hostile position toward Syria."

"The attack against Syria, the country that supports the Resistance, was an attack on the Resistance itself.... But the

role that Al-Hariri is playing will not bear fruit....

"As for Junblatt, he was so stupid that he revealed the main objective behind his attack against Hizbollah. He began giving lessons to the people of the south, and he appeared as a clown playing the role of a lecturer....

"The military defeat that Israel suffered has driven these people to punish those who caused this huge loss for Israel. The leaders of the May 17 group rushed to attack the victors and help Israel achieve, through press conferences, what its military machine failed to achieve....

"The forces of 17 May will continue to bark in the next phase. Their demands are Israeli demands. They demand that Hizbollah be disarmed, just as Israel is demanding. They demand the deployment of international forces to disarm Hizbollah, just as Israel is demanding. They are calling for an end to the Resistance, just as Israel is doing. They also want a big rift in Syrian-Lebanese relations, just what Israel seeks to create.

"The more these people attack Syria and its positions the more Syria knows it is correct and moving in the right direction."

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"They Exposed Themselves"

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Ahmad Dawwa, a columnist in government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote (8/18): "After President Asad's speech, the March 14 group began to act in a way that shows its involvement in the Zionist-American scheme.

"The hysteria that the March 14 group showed after Al-Asad's speech proves that this group is involved in the aggression and in covering it up.... Al-Asad offered conclusive proof of this involvement.

"It is true that the war against Lebanon exposed and identified suspicious and collaborative roles, but President Al-Asad's speech was the blow that knocked out all those who tried to disguise, hide, or wriggle out of their roles and join the new reality and reap part of the fruits of the major victory that the Resistance achieved. The crocodile tears and theatrical acts by some did not work....

"The next few days will show more of these facts and the failure that awaits this group as it tries to implement its new orders.... The time has changed, and the climate is not appropriate for a new May 17 agreement...."

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"No Place for Little Ones at Time of Victory"

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Dr. Adnan Mahmud, a columnist in government-owned Al-Thawra, commented (8/18): "The new May 17 trend will not be cleared of what happened in Lebanon, no matter how hard it tries to disguise and hide its nature, which has become clear to everyone, because its positions and trembling words that fear the victory of the Resistance bear the hallmarks of its allies in the United States and Israel...

"The Arab masses will not forgive those who wagered on Israel's victory and will not court those who fear the victory of the heroic Resistance, because they revealed their true faces when they renounced the action of the Resistance from the first moment of the aggression.

"Syria, against which they are plotting, today expresses the conscience of the Arab peoples, whose millions went out to chant for the Resistance and to announce their support for it and

their readiness to stand with it and offer every dear thing to regain the dignity of the nation....

"We were not surprised by statements of those petty fools, who are plotters by instinct. Their attack against Syria will only serve as an incentive for it to continue its honorable pan-Arab positions....

"History will never forgive those who are today trying to slaughter the Resistance and offer it as a present to Olmert and Bush after they failed to get it through the repressive machine they unleashed in Lebanon....

"The masks have fallen, and it is no longer useful for people to assume different colors. Those who were yesterday inciting the enemy against the Resistance will not be able to talk today, at the time of victory, pride, and dignity."

Corbin